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THE
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OR
EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY.

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Original Communications.

For the Religious Monitor.

THE CHURCH GOD'S WITNESS.

Sin made its entrance into the world in the way of giving God the lie. "The serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." Had this been true, he that had said they should die, could not be God, and whatever he might declare should not be believed: what he commands ought not to be obeyed; what he threatens ought not to be feared; what he promises ought to be despised and rejected; and what he himself proposes to do, ought to be opposed. But on the other hand, every mark of respect and adoration ought to be given to him who affirms, "Ye shall not surely die." This is a general view of the controversy that has obtained between God and Satan since the world began. The great majority of mankind, in all ages and nations, have taken part with the latter, and strenuously supported his pretensions; and they have acted precisely towards the true and eternal God, as if he were a liar, a deceiver, and not God. Every method he has chosen, to manifest his eternal power and Godhead, they have directly or indirectly tried to subvert; while they have tacitly assented to every claim which the God of this world has made on power and prerogative. Now, if God should train up a person in his own family, where every opportunity of knowing the truth is to be enjoyed, and if he should be at particular pains to manifest in his sight all his perfections, and grant to him a peculiar faculty of vision and also bring him quite near, that he might see most distinctly and examine most minutely, I ask, what would be that persons duty if called upon to speak between God and his adversaries? Would it not be to declare what he had seen and heard of God, in opposition to all that they might allege?

and to do this with all the zeal, constancy and firmness of a devoted, faithful child?

The church occupies precisely the place of this person, which I shall endeavour to prove.

PROPOSITION I. *The church is God's Witness.*

1. Because she is the party best qualified to be so. To her, God has at all times revealed himself. And she is now in possession of the entire revelation of his mind and will, in a language understood; and it is placed perfectly within the reach of the poorest. Never did a father so completely unbosom himself to a dear child, as God has done to his church. He has been at the greatest pains to instruct her in the knowledge of the truth. To impress it deeply upon her mind, he has employed a great variety of modes of communication. By type and symbol, by dream and vision, by audible voices, face to face; by Urim and Thummim, and by angels. He has raised up and qualified teachers, with a variety of gifts and offices, for the same purpose. Preachers of righteousness, patriarchs, lawgivers, judges, priests and prophets. And in these latter days he has sent his only begotten Son from heaven, who, besides his own personal ministry, which was a declaration of God's great name, has left behind him when he went to heaven, apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. He has accompanied his communications, both under the Old and New Testaments, with the most stupendous miracles by which every doubt as to the character of his servants might be excluded and the attention forcibly drawn to their doctrine. He has sent down his holy Spirit to open the eyes of her understanding, that she might understand the scriptures—to lead her into all truth, and to bring all things to her remembrance. He has instituted ordinances and sacraments to be premanent exhibitions of all revealed truth. And if all this were too little, the holy Ghost writes it on the table of the heart, so that she may not only see it with her eyes and hear it with her ears, but feel it a living principle, and be able to say, “that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we have looked upon and our hands have handled—declare we unto you.

2. For this express purpose, God has erected and preserved the church. This may be inferred from the first gospel promise,—“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.” By the seed of the woman is intended first and chiefly, Christ, who overcame the world, spoiled principalities and destroyed death: but all his true followers are also included, and are called (Rev. xii. 17.) by this same name. They

too, under the conduct of the Captain of their salvation, and equipped with the whole armour of God, wrestle against flesh and blood, against principalities and powers. But in doing this, they necessarily declare that God is the true God, and that all his enemies are liars. More particularly, God says "This people have I formed for myself, and they shall show forth my praise." Isaiah xliii. 21. But his praise lies wholly within the compass of that revelation which he has made of himself to his church. There, his great name is fully declared—his counsels of infinite wisdom revealed—his great and marvellous works narrated—his true Godhead set forth in the most glorious manner. But before the church can serve this specified end of her formation, she must in some measure echo and reflect this glory; she must set it forth in her public profession, and exemplify it in her conversation; and she must maintain and defend it against all attempts to tarnish or corrupt it. Less than this, would not be showing forth his praise in a voluntary, active and zealous manner, which is here intended. But this embraces all the duties of a Witness. Paul, directed by the holy Spirit, calls the church—"the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. iii. 15. The language is figurative, and is borrowed from the custom of putting up proclamations and edicts upon pillars, that all concerned might read them; and by this the apostle teaches the church, that God has raised her up for the express purpose of exhibiting his truth to the world, in the most public, distinct and formal manner: and that her laws, ordinances, worship and doctrine, have this end to serve.

3. The church is bound by the moral law, to bear witness for God. The law says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour;" much less, against "the Lord thy God." The forbidding of this sin implies the opposite duty, viz: Thou shalt bear true witness for thy neighbour; and therefore, much more, for the Lord thy God. This precept requires us, to preserve and promote truth—to appear and stand for it—and from the heart, sincerely, firmly, clearly and fully, to speak the truth and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in all things whatsoever. If, in this manner, we are bound to witness in the cause of our neighbour, how much more, in the cause of the God of truth who cannot lie? Moreover, this precept was publicly given to the church by the hand of Moses, and must therefore, have been intended to define the church's duty in relation to all truth; but especially the truth of God. From this obligation, she never can be released. The gospel dispensation greatly increases her obligations and multiplies her motives, to bear wit-

ness to the truth. It is also addressed to the individual professor, and binds him to this duty equally in all places, relations, and stations; and condemns most pointedly, as a breach of this precept, the conduct of many, who, upon changing their place of abode, or entering into a new relation in life, or some new avocation, make such an alteration in their public profession of God's truth as makes it convenient to their circumstances.

4. The duty of the church in all ages has been laid down in such a form, that, while it expresses her obedience to God, it also explicitly testifies against the Serpent and his seed. As early as the days of Enoch, public testimonies were given against the ungodly deeds and hard speeches of the wicked; (Jude 14, 15.) and this was done in the performance of official duty. In building the Ark, Noah not only manifested his faith in God and obedience to him, but also *condemned the world*. (Heb. xi. 7.) Abraham's departure from his country and kindred and sojourning in a strange land, with Isaac and Jacob, was a public and explicit renunciation of the prevailing idolatry and sinful courses of their time, as it was an open avowal of the true God and of obedience to him. That Abraham had such an understanding as this, in what he did, may be gathered, not obscurely, from what he said to Abimelech. "Because I thought surely the fear of God is not in this place," (Gen. xx. 11.) that is, he thought every place was full of idolatry, and that all had apostatized from the true religion. Most of the ceremonial services, while they shadowed forth good things to come, were efficiently a testimony against idolatrous nations around. Moses refuses to agree to Pharaoh's proposal that the Israelites should sacrifice to the Lord in Egypt, because they would sacrifice the abominations of the Egyptians, viz: the very species of animal which they worshipped as a God. When they entered the tabernacle they did so with their faces towards the west and their backs towards the east; this was a plain testimony against all those worshippers of idols who turned their faces towards the east, and plainly intimated, that the whole worship of Jehovah in that holy place was in opposition to theirs. Though the seventh commandment might have been considered as a sufficient reason for prohibiting all the unlawful marriages and lusts mentioned in (Lev. xviii.) yet another is added, to which also they were to have respect in obeying this precept, viz: "For all these abominations have the men of the land done which were before you." Again: "Ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you; for they committed all these things, therefore I abhorred them." Lev. xx. 23. And there was nothing which they were

so carefully to guard against, as learning the manners of the nations. God made a broad line of distinction between them, by observing which they were continually witnessing against their neighbours: and therefore did these neighbours heartily detest and hate them, as they against whom a pointed testimony is given, have always done and will continue to do. For "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." The same thing may be pointed out in the New Testament. When Christ had cleansed the leper he enjoined him to go and show himself to the priest, and offer the gift which Moses commanded; but this was not enough, he must do this "for a testimony unto them." Matth. viii.

4. The Christian's duty is to put on the whole armour of God, and *fight, wrestle, strive together, and contend earnestly*, for the faith of the gospel. This is much more than to give testimony to it. Many would give their testimony, when they would not be willing to fight for truth. And this consideration may satisfy any one, that bearing testimony to the faith of the gospel, is certainly included, though not expressed, in these passages.

5. Christ, the head of the church, is a Witness, consequently she must be so. The Father by the prophet says, "Behold, I have given him for a Witness to the people." Isa. lv. 4. And he himself, speaks thus: "For this cause was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might *bear witness to the truth*." John xviii. 37. And Paul, sets this before Timothy for imitation, when he gives him charge—"before Christ Jesus, who, before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession." 1 Tim. vi. 13. He is styled, the "Faithful witness," (Rev. i. 2.) "the Amen, the faithful and true witness." Rev. iii. 14. This is one of the things in which he is imitable; and surely the church, which is his body, his bride, whom he has redeemed with his own blood, and regenerated by his own Spirit—on whom he confers all the treasures of his grace, a kingdom and a crown, is bound to imitate him in every thing imitable. On what can she ground her pretensions to having the Spirit of Christ Jesus, if she have not the witnessing Spirit?

6. All official servants of Christ, under both dispensations, are denominated witnesses. Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Gideon, Barak and Jephtha, Samson, David and Samuel, and all the prophets, were witnesses for God in their day and generation. See Heb. xi. and xii. 1. Their testimony was substantially the same with that of the church now—"Christ in his sufferings and the glory that should follow." "To him gave all the prophets witness." John the Baptist also "came for a witness, that he might bear witness of that light, that all men through him

might believe." John i. 7. This was the character given by Christ, to his eleven apostles, after his resurrection: "And ye are witnesses of these things." Luke xxiv. 45. When one was to be selected to fill the place of Judas, he had to be "ordained a witness, with the rest, of Christ's resurrection." Acts i. 22. When Paul was called to be an apostle it was also "to be his witness to all men of what things he had seen and heard." Acts xxii. 15. And his preaching, was a "*Witnessing* to small and great, saying none other things than those which Moses and the prophets did say should come." Acts xxvi. 22. All the faithful ministers of the gospel which have lived, or are yet to live, during the thousand two hundred and sixty days of Anti-Christ, are called, "My two witnesses." Rev. xi. 3. Accordingly the gospel they preach, which shall be preached in all the world, is denominated "a witness to all nations." Matth. xxiv. 14. Hence it follows, that if any man faithfully do the duties of a gospel minister, he must be *bearing witness*.

Finally. The church collectively, is expressly so called. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." Isa. xliii. 12.—xlvi. 8. This was not a character belonging to that generation alone; nor was it given to them because they were the seed of Jacob according to the flesh, but because they were the *church* of God. The reasons assigned for it are such as will hold good while there is a church upon earth. They are contained in the words following: "and my *servant* whom I have chosen, that ye may *know* and *believe* and *understand* that I am he." In the xiith chapter of the Hebrews, it is private believers and public officers, men and women of different ages and generations, that are called "so great a cloud of witnesses." In the Revelation, ministers and private Christians, though only in the xith chapter expressly called witnesses, yet in sundry places they are plainly spoken of as acting in that character. Our Lord Jesus says to the church of Pergamos—"And thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, [witness,] who was slain among you." Rev. ii. 13. Is not this commending them for pursuing the same course with Antipas? and that was, witnessing faithfully to the truth at all hazards. At the opening of the fifth seal, John saw—"under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the *testimony* which they held." Rev. vi. 9. But unless we are to understand that they were *witnesses* for the word of God, and stood so firmly to their profession and defence of it, that they chose death with life rather than truth, it will be impossible to understand the words at all. And we must make the same infer-

ence from the following passages: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their *testimony*, and they loved not their lives unto the death."—"And the Dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the *testimony* of Jesus." Rev. xii. 11. and 17.—"And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the *witness* of Jesus and the word of God." Rev. xx. 4. Without attempting to fix on the precise events alluded to in these passages, we may safely refer them to the bloody persecutions which the church suffered from Rome, both in its Pagan and Anti-Christian states; and they present to us the church for a series of ages, not only *professing* the character of God's witness, but *sustaining* it with an inflexibility and zeal, that might put the best of witness bearers, in the present day, to the blush. Since then, the church has been obviously trained up and qualified to be a witness—formed and preserved for this purpose—bound to it by the moral law—having the whole course of duty in all ages in the form of a testimony—Christ and all his official servants going before her as examples—and herself expressly so called, it must require the audacity and impudence of apostacy itself, to deny it.

PROPOSITION II. *This Witness is bound to give her testimony to the WHOLE OF REVEALED TRUTH and to nothing else.*

Even the light of reason teaches all courts of justice to demand of every witness to "to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." And why should God require less?—The fact that he has committed to her trust the *whole* of revealed truth, evidently implies this much. And the consideration, that all of it rests on his testimony who cannot lie—is all according to godliness and instrumental in sanctification, enforces the duty, and it ought at least to restrain every one bearing the christian name from the impiety and presumption of setting up distinctions among revealed truths which God himself has not set up. Every jot and tittle of it was regarded in the testimony of the "Faithful and true witness." Every word of God is most precious—sweeter than honey—more valuable than fine gold. Man lives, by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Who then, will set his wisdom up against God, and call that *circumstantial*, which he calls *vital*? But though her obligation to truth cannot be limited, yet her actual performance of duty is necessarily so. First, it will be limited by her knowledge of the truth. She cannot bear testimony to truth which she has not discovered. Nor will she ever be able to discover or comprehend all that God has revealed. But upon discovering any truth she is

already bound to hold it fast. She is bound also, to "search the scriptures" with the utmost attention and diligence and prayer, for the direction of the Spirit of truth; and ardently to seek, by all means and opportunities, to increase in knowledge. Second, it ought to be extended to those particulars, whether of doctrine, worship or government, to which the adversaries of truth direct their attack. If her testimony be not so formed as to cover all these, it will be as useless as it will be ridiculous. I say ridiculous, for what can be more so, than a body of witnesses giving testimony to that which none deny, and keeping silent on those particulars which are in dispute. It would be as rational for the soldiers in a fort, to leave that part of the works where the enemy is attempting to make a breach, unprotected, and bring all their force and skill to the defence of that part on which no attempt is made. If the points, on which God has required his witness in different ages to give their testimony, be examined, they will be found in all cases, to be the points at issue between him and his adversaries. I have observed already, under the first proposition, that the course of duty has always been moulded into the form of a pointed testimony against prevailing errors. But besides this, there has been generally some leading question in dispute. For ages and generations, the question was, whether is Jehovah the true God or not? All the nations said not, and in Ahab's time, the great majority of Israel said not, until Elijah, God's witness, came forward and gave his testimony on Carmel, which at that time decided it. "And all the people said, the Lord he is God, the Lord he is God." On the same question God calls upon his church, in the passages before quoted, to give their testimony—"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." When the Messiah made his appearance, the enemies of truth turned all their sophistry against him; and the testimony then required of the church was, that "*Jesus is the Christ.*" And to point out this to her God raised up sundry persons to go before and lead the way. Besides Anna and Simeon and the wise men, he sent John the Baptist for this special end. And he also repeatedly gave his own testimony to it, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." After his resurrection, it became necessary to add to this testimony, that "God raised him from the dead," because this was obstinately denied. Soon after this, his Divinity was called in question, and then the church's testimony was, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. In proof of this truth, the whole gospel of John was written. See chap. xx. 31. If the testimony of John the Baptist, of Christ, and of all the Apostles, on particular occasions, be considered, still it is the present truth

for which they all contend; embracing the *jots and tittles* as well as *essentials* or fundamentals. And if the testimony of those martyrs so honourably mentioned in the Revelation, be considered, it will always be found formed precisely on this principle, and covering the minutiae as well as things of great magnitude. They would neither worship the beast, nor his image, nor receive his mark. It is true that the church has been called to witness against great and fundamental errors, for centuries back—against Socinian, Pelagian and Arminian errors, which threaten, in every modification of them, to subvert the gospel; but she ought not therefore to think that the smallest particle of truth, which the enemy in his wisdom deems worthy to attack, may be safely let go. The pins, loops and taches, of the tabernacle, were but small matters, yet had they been removed, the whole fabric would have fallen asunder. To enumerate the particulars to which the church is at this day loudly called upon to bear testimony, would be to enumerate the whole system of doctrine and worship delivered to the saints: and besides all this, the duty of bearing witness itself. For the enemy now endeavours to persuade the church to give witness-bearing wholly up, and to banish Creeds and Confessions, as unscriptural obstructions to christian and ministerial fellowship.

PROPOSITION III. *Every one is to give testimony according to his place and opportunity.*

In the whole of christian duty, as has been mentioned, respect ought to be had to this one. The individual Christian is to have this in view, while he maintains a deportment becoming the gospel of Christ. By that deportment he ought daily to tell all that see him, that the doctrines of the gospel are according to godliness, holiness, humility, meekness, peace with all men, forgiveness of offences—that they they teach to give to every one his own, honour to whom honour, tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom—whatsoever things are honest, just, lovely and of good report. And this would be substantially a testimony against the world, who account the gospel foolishness, against all who neglect or oppose it, or charge its doctrines with a tendency to licentiousness. A respect to this duty, ought constantly to influence him. He ought to form no connection in society, commercial or social, political or religious, for a short time or for life, that would either hinder him from appearing as a witness for any one particular in a scriptural profession, or ensnare him into practices which tacitly oppose or contradict it. The calling, however lucrative, the situation however pleasant, the country however inviting, that must be come at by such a price, he ought to refuse.

To this duty, parents ought to have respect in training up their children, and all entrusted to their care. In their precepts and example, in the instructions they communicate, in the seasons and opportunities they embrace for this purpose, and in their manner of teaching, they ought to be influenced by it. They ought not to be satisfied while there is a single opportunity yet to be embraced, or means yet to be used, to put them in possession of every truth which themselves know. And that parent, who uses no means to inform the judgment of his children of the reasons of his profession—never inculcates on them this duty of *witnessing for God*, nor prepares them for it, but surrenders truth to its enemies—puts no check on the corruptions of his children's hearts, and is a traitor to the cause of God.

Ruling elders, in their individual and judicative capacity, ought to keep this duty constantly in view. They are to watch over their flock, in all things pertaining to their public profession, counselling, admonishing and reproof faithfully when and where necessary, without respect of persons or fear of reproach.

Ministers of the gospel in particular, are to declare the whole counsel of God and keep nothing back, fearless of consequences,—to “cry aloud and spare not, but lift up their voice like a trumpet,”—“to be instant in season and out of season,”—“to reprove, rebuke and exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine,”—“by sound speech which cannot be condemned, to put to silence the ignorance of wicked men,”—and to defend the truth in every way in which they have opportunity, knowing that they are set for the defence of the gospel. In their judicial capacity, they ought to strive together for the faith of the gospel. And it is especially competent to them to give a public judicial testimony to the whole of the present truth. They are to seek opportunities and devise means for spreading the knowledge of gospel doctrines—and most especially ought they to watch over their own spirits, lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble them, and the church at large.

The church in her collective capacity, not only in celebrating all divine ordinances which are commonly observed, but particularly in observing that much neglected duty, *Public Religious Covenanting*, is to appear as God's witness. It is one of the ends of this duty, to afford her an opportunity of appearing publicly and jointly in this very character, and of giving the most unequivocal proofs of her sincerity and willingness to defend the truth. Such as have no very deep concern for truth on their hearts, and would be easier tempted to make their profession bow

to their circumstances than to expose themselves to reproach or inconvenience, may always be expected to excuse themselves from going thus far, no doubt under pretence of something very dutiful and becoming holiness; but it is not easy to conceive that a man, understanding the nature of this service and willing to go all lengths in behalf of God's truth, can have any difficulty about it. God might have withheld from the heirs of promise, the strong consolation of *his oath*, under pretence that his word was enough, and that he had in a variety of ways done what was tantamount, and that he had hitherto been just as faithful to his promise as he could be to his oath. Away then, with such pretences, and let us meet God in the same hearty, sincere and explicit manner, as he meets us.

In a word, the conduct of every one in respect to this duty, ought to be characterized by diligence, faithfulness, zeal, constancy and watchfulness.

There are still a number of important things to be advanced on this subject, by way of improvement.

To the Editor of the Religious Monitor,

SIR,

The following are the few additional observations which I promised to send you, respecting some statements made in the *Evangelical Witness* and in *Reformed Principles Exhibited*.—By giving them an early insertion in your valuable Magazine, you will much oblige

Yours, &c.

A. H.

REMARKS ON STATEMENTS MADE IN THE EVANGELICAL WITNESS, &c.

"He that is first in his own cause," saith Solomon, "seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him;" "which shows," says a judicious commentator, "that one tale is good till another is told." There is a striking exemplification of this saying, in a tale told, in the Declaration and Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, respecting some of the professed principles of the Associate Church. Were any person to read it, who is a stranger to the Associate Church, he would be led by it, to form a very incorrect idea of her principles; but were the same person to examine her subordinate standards, he would soon be convinced, that it is nothing but a tale, without any good foundation. The passage to which I think this character is justly applicable, is in that part of the *Reformed Testimony* which is entitled, a *Historical View of the Catholic Church*, p. 115. There it is said, Seceders were led to maintain, that "the world stands

not on purpose to exhibit the system of grace, but in order to bring into being the children of Adam, that they might be punished by the curse of the covenant of works."—That "the world would have stood and all the generations of men would have appeared in it, even if there had been no redemption provided for sinners."

I am glad to perceive that, in the Evangelical Witness, there is a considerable falling from these assertions. There it is only said, "the Secession ministers were driven to deny the procurement of common mercies by the death of Christ, and to maintain, that the covenant of works secures to believers, and to all men, their temporal blessings." vol. iv. p. 506.

It is admitted, that Associate Presbyterians, "reject the opinion of those, who teach that Christ did by his death, purchase the benefits of this life, which are common to all men." But they believe, that "the provision they need for their outward state, is given to them as to children, free from the curse which is on the basket and store of the wicked; and thus, all the good that is in these benefits, to believers, flows from the death of Christ. The same provision might have been given them, though he had never died for them, but not with the same gracious design of the giver, nor with the same blessing attending them." Test. p. 87. They profess to believe, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the representative and surety of the elect people of God—that he redeemed them by his blood—that they shall be infallibly saved by his life, and that for Christ's sake, God is pleased to bless their temporal, as well as spiritual mercies. But it appears, they do not profess to believe that Christ died to purchase temporal benefits for his people, and no doubt their reason for not doing so is, because there is no such doctrine in the holy Scriptures. And surely it is prudent, as well as dutiful, not to embody any thing in the public Standards of a church, unless it be taught in the Bible. It seems they also judged it contrary to the Shorter Catechism, for they say, "the blessings purchased by Christ are of that nature, that the holy Spirit only can make us partakers of them, and they can be actively received by faith only," and they are ever described as such in the Scriptures. Now, this precisely agrees with the account given of them in the Shorter Catechism, where it is distinctly asserted, that "the redemption purchased by Christ, is applied to us by the holy Spirit and received by faith." See Cat. Quest. 29, 30. And what is still more to the purpose, all this can be clearly proved from the word of God; which plainly teaches, that Christ was made a curse for us, and through him we are called, that we may inherit a blessing.

It is also admitted, that the same provision might have been given to them, though he had never died for them, but not with the same gracious design of the giver, nor with the same blessing attending it to them. It will be seen by this, taken in connection with what is stated above, that they believe all, that is really good in temporal blessings, flows from the death of Christ; and as to the rest, it is a mere supposition. They say "the same provision might have been given them, though he had never died for them." It is then, merely a hypothetical case. It is obvious, it can be nothing else, because it is admitted, that Christ hath actually come and died for his people. Now, since such a conjecture has been hazarded, we may enquire for a moment into the reasonableness of it. And here we may observe, it will loose nothing by a comparison with the supposition made by these Reformed Presbyterian brethren, (for they also, have a supposition on this subject.)—It is said, in the Scotch Reformed Testimony, (p. 183.) they acknowledge, "the standing of the world, and all the common favours of life indifferently enjoyed by mankind sinners, to result as native, necessary and determined consequences, from the interposition of Christ in behalf of his spiritual seed, and to have their ultimate foundation in the infinite sufficiency of the blood and sacrifice of Christ, God-man." This declaration, evidently supposes that, had it not been for the undertaking and sacrifice of Christ, the world must have been destroyed immediately on the fall of man. Now this is an opinion, neither supported by reason nor scripture, and it is altogether inconsistent with the Confessions of most of the Reformed Churches. To give an example. It is taught in the Shorter Catechism, that Adam represented all his posterity descending from him by ordinary generation, and that in consequence of his sin, they became liable to the punishment threatened against himself and all his posterity. Quest. 16 and 19. But, according to the opinion given in the Reformed Testimony, the posterity which Adam represented in the covenant of works, (in the case supposed,) could never have had any existence. For, it is not easy to see, how Adam could have had a posterity descending from him by ordinary generation, without the standing of the world.

This supposition of our Reformed brethren, is indeed too absurd to be admitted; and surely it is much more reasonable to think, that the posterity of Adam, against whom the threatening was denounced, was at least to have an existence: nor is it easy to conceive how this could have been the case, without at least some of the benefits of this life. Besides all this, the supposition, in the Associate Testimony, is perfectly agreeable to the

Westminster Confession of Faith, in which it is taught, that, God permits sin and disposes of sinners for his own holy ends. "The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first fall and all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as has joined with it, a most wise and powerful bounding and otherwise ordering and governing them, in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends, yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature and not from God." Confession chap. v. sec. 4. Indeed the whole matter amounts to no more than this, that God raises up and disposes of wicked men for his own holy ends.—For "the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Rom. ix. 7.

The only other statement, in the Historical View of the Catholic Church, that remains to be considered, is, that "the world stands not on purpose to exhibit the system of grace, but in order to bring into being the children of Adam, that they might be punished with the curse of the covenant of works." This is introduced into the Reformed Testimony, as a quotation taken from the public Standards of the Associate Church. Now, I have examined the standards of that church with a great deal of attention, and, I will venture to affirm, that there is no such statement to be found in them, and no doubt the whole thing is a fabrication. As I wish for nothing but truth and candour, I will not say but there probably may have been individuals, who may have so expressed themselves, that their Reformed brethren may have thought it safe to draw such an inference, from what they may have said, as this assertion may possibly turn out to be. The only thing, however, that I have been able to discover, even in the writings of individuals, bearing the slightest resemblance to this assertion, is a passage in an anonymous pamphlet quoted by the Rev. Dr. Anderson in his excellent work on church communion. The following is the passage: "Seceders believe that the world stands on purpose, that the covenant of grace may be exhibited and carried into execution, though they do not say that it stands for this purpose only; because, the standing of the world is also necessary, in order to the execution of the covenant of works, for which, as well as for the execution of the covenant of grace, the truth of God is engaged." Now, allowing this to have gone all the length of the assertion in the Reformed Testimony, it is obvious, it would not justify our Reform-

ed brethren in affirming, that such a sentiment was maintained by the Associate Church; because it is only the work of an unknown individual, and has never been acknowledged by that church, nor introduced into her Testimony. Just as it would be altogether unjustifiable, to represent all the opinions set forth in the Evangelical Witness, as doctrines maintained by the Reformed Presbyterian Church. To refer only to one example. It is given as an opinion, in the Evangelical Witness, that Moses when in the mount (Sinai) with God was partly employed in learning the method of alphabetical writing. It is asked, in the Witness, "Was it not a part of the work in which Moses was employed during forty days in the mount of God, to learn letters, and to familiarize himself with the nature of this sublime and wonderful discovery?" vol. iv. p. 103. It may indeed be allowed, that this is a very ingenious discovery, and it is vastly curious to think of the aged prophet sitting on the mountain learning the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; but it would be altogether improper to say that this was a principle held by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, although it should appear to be the opinion of one of her ministers.

But although we were to admit the passage taken from the pamphlet, to be agreeable to the principles of the Associate Church, still it will be seen, that it is totally a different thing from the assertion in the Reformed Testimony. It asserts, that "Seceders believe that the world stands on purpose that the covenant of grace may be exhibited and carried into execution, though they do not say it stands for this purpose only," which is perfectly sufficient to convince every unprejudiced person that there is no foundation in this passage for the principle unjustly imputed to Seceders. But there ought to be no difficulty about the principles of the Associate Church, because they are printed and published, and may be seen in the Bible, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Declaration and Testimony of that church.

The professed belief of the Associate Church on this subject, is, that God made and upholds the world, and disposes of all his creatures and orders all their actions for his own glory. Con. chap. v. sec. 1, 2. Larger Cat. Quest. 18. And as God does all things for his own glory, so for this end the world is maintained, that the covenant of grace may be exhibited and carried into execution, and also for every other thing that God may see meet to appoint or permit for his own glory. Thus it is said in the Confession of Faith chap. iii. sec. 3.—"By the decree of God for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predes-

minated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death." And to this, agree the words of the holy Scriptures. Rom. ix. 22.—"What if God, willing to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." And Prov. xvi. 4.—"The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—But I believe it is altogether unnecessary to take up longer time by attempting to prove what must be already abundantly obvious; especially as it is generally known, that the ministers of the Associate Church are in the habit of preaching, among other truths, that God made and upholds the world and all things in it, for his own glory; and in that church, christian parents are solemnly bound to teach their children, that "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever:" and that, "The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby for his own glory he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass."

Thus, I have briefly adverted to those statements in the *Evangelical Witness* and in *Reformed Principles Exhibited*, wherein some of the principles of the Associate Church, are entirely misrepresented. It seemed proper that these misrepresentations should be noticed, because it is known that some well meaning people have been misled by them. And, as I think it is highly probable, that the harm which men do to one another, is generally the result of mistake, I hope our Reformed Presbyterian brethren will not be unwilling to correct the mistakes which have been noticed.—9th Feb. 1827.

For the Religious Monitor.

ON REGENERATION.

MR. EDITOR,

Observing lately, upon reading Dr. Ridgely's *Body of Divinity*, on the subject of Regeneration, a sentiment advanced by the doctor upon that subject, which, in my opinion, is very exceptionable; and a sentiment, which, as far as is known to the writer of this paper, was never maintained before by any who passed for orthodox on the general and leading doctrines of the gospel. As the doctor will be considered as an authority by many on subjects of this kind, and as the work is by a late extensive edition of it, published in this country, put into the hands of great numbers, and something like the sentiments advanced by the doctor begins to make its appearance in some of the publications of modern times, whose character for orthodoxy is not disputed,

I concluded it might perhaps be of service to some of your readers to send my thoughts upon the sentiment advanced by him, to your useful miscellany for insertion if you deem them worthy of a place there.

What we dislike in the account the doctor gives of this saving work of God upon the soul, is that he makes regeneration to take place without the instrumentality of the word, or any of the ordinary means of grace. And his arguments to prove that this is indeed the case, we consider to be very inconclusive, and involved in great obscurity, if not founded upon mistaken views of the nature of a work of grace in the soul, both in regeneration, and in progressive sanctification. They are—

1st. "That it is necessary, from the nature of the thing, to our receiving, improving, or reaping any advantage by the word, that the Spirit should produce the principle of faith; and to say that this is done by the word is, in effect, to assert that the word produces the principle, and the principle gives efficacy to the word; which seems to me (he says) little less than arguing in a circle." When he says that the Spirit produces the principle of faith, we understand him and agree with him. But when he asserts that this is produced without the instrumentality of the word, while we cannot agree with him, for reasons which may appear afterwards, what claims our notice now, is the manner in which he attempts to prove it. "To say that this is done by the word is, in effect, to assert that the word produces the principle, and the principle gives efficacy to the word." A clear statement of the view taken by those who assert that the word is the instrument in this work will, to any unprejudiced mind, at once do away the difficulty. For though the word, according to them, produces the principle, yet it does not this of itself, but by the Spirit giving an efficacy unto it for that express purpose: or in other words, the Spirit giving an efficacy to the word, both produces the principle in regeneration, and carries the principle implanted, into operation afterwards; so that there is no arguing in a circle here. But the expression, "the principle gives efficacy to the word," which seems to be designed to represent his own view of the way in which the word becomes at all useful, either in regeneration, or in the progress of the work of sanctification in believers, represents something which appears utterly unintelligible upon the principles of sound theology; because sound theology teaches us, that it is the Spirit that gives all the efficacy to the word. The word is said to be "mighty through God" for pulling down strong holds, &c. and not through any inward principle or any thing in man. We only take notice of this expres-

sion to show, that there is some reason to believe, that the Dr. had got into that sentiment by means of some incorrect views he had concerning the Spirit's work in general, or felt it not a little difficult to support it in any degree of consistency with what correct views he had of the truth.

The 2d argument is, "the word cannot profit unless it be mixed with faith, and faith cannot be put forth unless it proceed from a principle of grace implanted, therefore this principle of grace is not produced by it: we may as well suppose (he says) that the presenting a beautiful picture before a man that is blind, can enable him to see; or, the violent motion of a withered hand produce strength for action, as we can suppose that the presenting the word, in an objective way, is the instrument whereby God produces that internal principle by which we are enabled to embrace it." Admitting that the principle of faith in regeneration goes before the act of faith which is produced by it, we see no reason why the instrumentality of the word may not be considered as used in the implanting of that principle, as well as in promoting the believers sanctification afterwards: For, that principle of grace, is just the understanding enlightened, the will renewed, &c.; and how can this be in any adult person, capable of exercising these faculties, without the word, by which the holy Spirit operates to the enlightening of the one, and directing and influencing the other? The argument from the necessity of the word being mixed with faith in order to our attaining any real and certain benefit from it, if of force in the use he makes of it, would prove too much for the Dr. himself, because he grants that the word is the instrument whereby the Spirit carries on the work of sanctification. But this argument would go as far to prove that sanctification is carried on without the instrumentality of the word, as it will to prove that regeneration is effected without its instrumentality; because, even in sanctification, the word cannot be mixed with faith but by the Spirit's working this faith in us, or leading the principle implanted in regeneration, into action, as appears from Song i. 4. and iv. 6. and many other passages of scripture; and therefore, the Spirit's work here must go before that faith which improves the word for sanctification. But how does the Spirit draw out the principle into action, in the believers sanctification? It is by the word, and by that same word, we may conclude, he begets faith in the first exercise of it, and the principle which produces it; making the word the instrument by which he operates in effecting that great and important change upon the sinner. The two comparisons used by the Dr. may be turned with good advantage against himself; because, though a

beautiful picture placed before a man that is blind could not give him sight, it might be the means of even doing this, if it was intended by the Almighty to be so. We are told in scripture of a thing, altogether as unlikely, made a means, through the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, of causing a blind man to see: we refer to the circumstance mentioned in the gospels of a blind man cured by our Lord, by simply anointing his eyes with clay. The violent motion of the withered hand, as the mere action of the arm that wields it, cannot, it must be allowed, produce strength for action in the hand itself, yet we read of a man who was commanded to stretch out his withered hand, and a power, which went along with the word, communicated the ability, so that he stretched it out, and it was made whole as the other. And what might hinder the word, though unequal of itself to give sight to the spiritually blind, and life to the dead sinner, to be the instrument, in the hand of the Spirit, for these important purposes?

The 3d argument, is contained in the following words: "Neither would this so well agree with the idea of its being a new creature, or our being created unto good works; for then, it ought rather to be said, we are created by faith which is a good work; this is to say, that the principle of grace is produced by the instrumentality of that which supposes its being implanted, and is the result and consequence thereof." There is no seeming inconsistency between considering the believer, in virtue of the regenerating principle he is made a partaker of, as a new creature, and affirming that this change, which is passed upon him, was effected by the instrumentality of the word: because, as the first creation of all things was effected by a word of Almighty power, (for in bringing the world into existence, from a state of nonentity, "he spake and it was done, he commanded and all things stood fast,") so the new creation is accomplished by the word of the gospel, made the power of God for the salvation of those who are its subjects, and begetting faith in them, that they may embrace Christ as the great salvation, and the principle of faith and every other grace. That a work of God, whether of nature or of grace, may be entitled to the character of a creation work, it is not requisite that it be accomplished without means, and our asserting that the word is the instrument, in what is called the new creation, is accordingly without that absurdity, the Dr. would attach to it. Our admitting too, that this new creation is effected by the instrumentality of the word generally, lays no ground for the assertion, that then we would be created by faith, because though the word cannot profit without faith, yet faith does not go before but follows the word, which both begets the

act of faith and the principle which produces it, being in the hand of the Spirit, the instrument for this purpose.

Having presented his arguments to prove that regeneration is accomplished without the instrumentality of the word, he tries to account for the other way of thinking on this subject. "I am ready (he says) to conjecture that what leads many divines into this way of thinking, is the sense in which they understand the words of the Apostle, "Being born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Pet. i. 23. and elsewhere, "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." James i. 16. Whereas, this does not so much respect the implanting the principle of grace, as it does our being enabled to act from that principle; and it is as though he should say, he hath made us believers or induced us to love and obey him, by the word of truth, which supposes a principle of grace to have been implanted: otherwise the word of truth would never have produced these effects. Regeneration may be taken not only for our being made alive unto God or created unto good works, but for our putting forth living actions proceeding from that principle which is implanted in the soul. I am far from denying that faith and all other graces are wrought in us, by the instrumentality of the word; and it is in this sense, that some who treat on this subject, explain their sentiments when they speak of being born again by the word." Of consequence, according to the Dr. regeneration, strictly speaking, and the new birth, are quite distinct things, according to any conception we are to form of them; and the new birth is not to be referred to that change which takes place when the sinner is brought from nature to grace, nor to be restricted to any given period of time, but is a thing which is taking place every day; according as the believer is carried out by new supplies of grace, he obtains to the practice of duty. "*It is (he says) our being enabled to act from that principle: and it is as though he should say, he hath made us believers or induced us to love and obey him by the word of truth:*" which is but what God is doing by his Spirit upon his people every day, by means of his word, and various other ordinances of his grace. And lest we should misunderstand him and conclude that he intends only to show, that the Apostle meant, that only those who are born again can do good actions, but that he means something more than this, he adds, "Regeneration may be taken, not only for our being made alive to God, &c. but for our putting forth living actions," attempting to prove thereby, that these passages, if they respect regeneration at all, it must be

in this very extended sense of the word. It is some such a kind of new birth as the Arminians receive into their creed, which they may have and lose, and which rises and falls as they stand or fall from grace; for in the language of the Dr. being born again, may be taken, for *our putting forth living actions, proceeding from that principle*. But this the believer does not always, or at least sometimes he does it in so small a degree that it is scarcely perceptible. He is sometimes more, sometimes less active, spiritually, as the measure of grace is, which is given to him, according to the gift of Christ.

There is only one way by which, when he asserts that to be born again is, our being enabled to act from that principle implanted in regeneration, he can be supposed to mean, with any shade of consistency with himself, that the new birth is a work of God which takes place at one and the same moment of time, and that is by allowing him to consider it as an ability given by God, to exercise the principle implanted in regeneration, (for he says it is different from regeneration properly so called,) which man continues ever after, unaided of God, to put forth of himself, so that he is like a clock, that put together by its maker and set in motion, moves by a power inherent in itself; because, if the ability of the Christian to act from that principle, is by continued supplies of grace, and more or less, as these supplies are granted, it could not be one act of God, but a continued acting or a succession of acts, in the way of communicating that ability. But as he says it *may be taken* for the putting forth of living actions, this seems to put it beyond a doubt, that according to him, it is not to be confined to any given time, or particular act of God, towards the sinner. So much with respect to the Dr.

The Editor of the Philadelphia edition, in a foot note, defends the sentiment and advances some things equally as exceptionable concerning this first work of the Spirit of God upon the soul.—“No intervention (he says) of second causes seems necessary.—The Spirit of God is the agent; the soul of man is the subject of influence; and he is said to open the heart, to give a new heart, to create anew, to enlighten the mind in the knowledge of the truth, to work in us to will and to do; or to give sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf. From such expressions, it may be gathered that sight, knowledge, new dispositions, and a change of inclinations, are the effect of regeneration, not the thing itself.” Again: “If the holy Spirit acts no otherwise than by motives, angelic natures do this also, and no more power is ascribed to the Searcher of hearts than to them.” He makes it to be entirely a physical change, and seems to mistake the view of those

who hold that the Spirit of God, in regeneration, uses the instrumentality of the word. For it is not their opinion, that the holy Spirit acts no otherwise than by addressing motives to the soul, in regeneration. On the contrary they maintain, that while he addresses with motives, he exerts a power, in producing this change, through the word, so as these motives take their effect; and this is the sole reason, according to them, why the same motives presented to every hearer of the gospel, which are lost upon many, to others have an efficacy in them, to draw them to Christ. But this will be considered afterwards.

(To be concluded in our next.)

For the Religious Monitor.

ON THE QUESTION, WHETHER A MAN MAY MARRY HIS DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER?

(Continued from page 460)

It is unquestionably a correct principle, that whatever God in his word plainly and positively enjoins, it is the duty of men to observe and do, whether they be able to discover the reason *why* such command has been given or not. To do so without gainsaying, is the best acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God, as our lawgiver; and to do so cheerfully, is the best evidence we can give of our faith in the character of God, as holy, just and good. But if, as is sometimes the case, the reason of the commandment is either declared in the scriptures, or is so obvious as to present itself readily to the reflecting mind, and this be such as at once to illustrate the holiness of God, and his amazing goodness to his creatures, in providing, by the laws which he gives them, for their greatest happiness,—disobedience must certainly, in such a case, be most unreasonable, and the sin of it, in the sight of God, most highly aggravated. The bearing of these remarks, on the subject under discussion, is obvious. We have in the first part of this paper exhibited, from the Christian's Magazine, reasoning which we hope will satisfy every unbiassed mind, that the marriage of a deceased wife's sister is plainly and explicitly forbidden in the law of God, or which is the same thing, that a woman is as expressly forbidden to marry the husband of her deceased sister, as she is to worship a false god, to commit murder or perjury, or to covet her neighbours husband; and that there is just as much *inference*, and no more, in the one case as in the other.—Were we able, then, to discover *no reason why* God has placed men under this law, the sovereignty of the lawgiver announced in that emphatic sentence prefixed to his statute, "I am the Lord,"

claims our unreserved obedience; and intimates to us, that it is at our peril to disobey. But over and above this expression of authority, we have reasons and motives presented to win us to obedience by the powerful constraints of love; for in the same sentence, it is written, "I am your God," your covenant God, whose name and memorial is the Lord, the Lord God, merciful, and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. And a due consideration of this statute, will shew its full accordance with this character of its author, and that it is calculated in the highest degree to promote the purity and happiness of the human family.—The powerful reasonings which we are now to extract from the pages of Dr. Livingston and Domesticus, will place the subject in the most pleasing and interesting point of view, and afford the strongest confirmation, if confirmation were necessary, of the correctness of the conclusion already established, from the scriptures themselves. In this, as well as in every other, it is most true, that "the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; and in keeping of them there is GREAT REWARD."

In stating the argument from scripture, Dr. L. coincides with, or rather *adopts* the reasoning, which we have quoted in the first part of this paper, and corroborates this argument by shewing, in a manner the most delicate and pleasing, and we think most satisfactory, the fatal consequences of violating, and the blessed fruits of duly observing, this ordinance of the Lord. His observations on this head, which is entitled "Decency," are thus introduced.

"When incontrovertible arguments have decided a question, it may appear improper to add corroborating observations. But the subject before us extends, with interesting consequences, in every direction—it may therefore be expedient, besides arguments, to suggest considerations which appeal to the feelings of the heart. Only two shall be mentioned.—The first is distinguished by the title of DECENCY.*

'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things,' *Phil.* iv. 8. With this affecting and sublime group of words, the inspired Apostle suggests the influence and extent of sanctified principles, and recommends that beauty of holiness and undeviating rectitude of Christian

* The other is the avoiding of giving offence, a thing in itself of no small importance, on this subject.

manners, which include all that is implied in decency and delicacy.'

Marriage is justly styled "a delicate institution," essentially connected with order and decency. Sweet spring of purest comforts, exuberant source of domestic happiness, it pours its precious blessings wherever it is honoured, and amply pays for protection and defence. But, exposed to insults and susceptible of injuries, it withholds its invaluable benefits from those who suffer it to be abused and polluted. Any people who tolerate incest of any description; who countenance adultery; or sanction divorces for any other cause, than what the word of God prescribes; will quickly realise the pernicious effects of their conduct. They will rapidly depreciate in taste and sentiment, and infallibly degenerate in morals. If the fountain of social virtue be troubled and poisoned, the streams will inevitably be turbid, bitter, and fatal—"thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee."

Many indecent and indelicate, disagreeable and unpleasant consequences resulting from a marriage with a sister in law, will be readily anticipated by every serious and reflecting mind. Let it suffice to observe; that admitting (which cannot in truth be granted,) that a doubt might be cherished whether a sister in law be a relation, within the prohibited degrees; must it not still be acknowledged, that to marry such a relative is a rash and dangerous act? Is it not perilous to advance as near as possible to the brink of a precipice? Is it safe, is it prudent, is it consistent with the Christian character, to approach deliberately to the very verge of an abominable and accursed crime, under the infatuated and fluctuating hope that *perhaps* it may *possibly* be an exemption?

But it is not only rash and dangerous to the individuals; it is also injurious to the community. Such marriages trespass upon the rules of decency; they are inimical to that purity, and chastity of families, which insure the repose and happiness of society; they are hostile to that virtue and delicacy, which the religion of nature, and revealed religion inculcate.

In the confidence of protection from a man, who by his marriage has been brought into the family, and *become a brother*, the younger sisters are always in the habit of associating familiarly and frequently with their married sister—their former affection is not interrupted by the introduction of a new relative. This is proper. It is consistent with the most rigid rules of morality. It is founded upon the indisputable presumption, that the sister of the wife is now also become *the sister of the husband*, and he is *her brother*.

No suspicion of indecency can arise in her mind, nor any imputation of indelicacy upon the part of the public. She may come, remain, or go, in all the safety of innocence, under the broad shield of the divine law, and the universal consent and approbation of society. But let it be once adopted, let practice establish the detestable principle, that the sister, after the death of the wife, may become *not at all related* to the husband; that she may be to him a stranger, and as much the legitimate object of marriage as any other woman, and her frequent and familiar visits must cease. She can no more come to his house, or be oftener seen in the company of her *brother-in-law*, than she may frequent the house or be familiar in the company of any other married man. The affectionate intercourse of the sisters is at an end.

As it respects himself and the unhappy victim of his incestuous cohabitation—is it not *indecent* to persuade her to an act, which could she have foreseen, would, from principles of delicacy, have prevented the familiar intercourse, in which, as a *sister*, she had innocently indulged?—Nay, is it not cruel, to render the woman, who had placed confidence in him as a *brother*, a partaker with him, in the fearful risks and alarming consequences of such a connection?"

Domesticus, who is believed to be the Rev. Alexander M'Clellan, one of the Professors of Dickinson College, pursues the same argument which we have just quoted from Dr. Livingston. There is however this difference: Dr. L. uses it as a collateral argument and rests the strength of his cause on the direct argument from the Scripture, as stated in the first part of this paper: Domesticus, without any necessity, and without even attempting to shew that the direct argument is not a sound one, very improperly gives it up altogether, and rests the weight of his cause on the argument from expediency. After admitting, (page 36,) that it is not said in so many words that a man may not marry two sisters, he adds; "If however the *Letter* be not in Leviticus the *Spirit* is there, and with this I am perfectly satisfied. I ask myself, what is the reason of the prohibitions that law *actually contains*, ex. gr. of the Marriage of Brother and Sister, Aunt and Nephew, Mother-in-law and Son-in-law?—I discover it; and I find it to apply against the marriage in controversy, with *appalling force*. My conclusion is, that it is as really part of the *will of God*,—of the *divine institution*, as those which are more clearly expressed."

The ingenuity, eloquence and force of reasoning, with which this conclusion is supported, are of the first order; and though we are not satisfied that, all this of itself, without the direct prohibition contained in Leviticus, which is unnecessarily and rashly

surrendered by Domesticus, would establish the certainty of a divine constitution;—yet in connexion with that law, and resting on it as its foundation, as it ought to do, it becomes, in our estimation, an irresistible demonstration of the correctness of that argument, and of the glory of divine holiness and goodness as manifested in that institution. The following extracts, will put our readers in possession of the most material parts of the reasoning of Domesticus, though perhaps its unity and effect may be impaired for the want of the parts which we are under the necessity of omitting.*

“The reason of the law of incest—one that is perfectly adequate and convincing is this;—It is the great moral safeguard appointed by Providence for *protecting the laws of Marriage and Chastity* without which *the best organized society, that the earth has ever seen upon its surface would become in a few years a hideous mass of corruption and rottenness*. It is no petty artifice to extend friendships,—or to secure filial reverence,—or to stock the world with healthy children. All this is as chaff compared with the magnificent purposes of the institution. It is an expedient for guarding against a species of criminality which would destroy society in its fountains;—and the only way of guarding against it, is by declaring such an awful sacredness in the persons of those nearly related, that touching one another, even *after a marriage compact*, is enormity. The law speaks in this strain, “such is the turpitude of the act, that no matrimonial covenant,—no holy ceremonies,—no solemn vows, can hallow it or wash the offender from his foulness.” In a word, it forbids Marriage itself, thereby more effectually to inspire that abhorrence of intercourse *without marriage* which it is chiefly anxious to prevent. It is thus that where the danger of criminality would be greater from the unrestrained familiarity of the family circle, were there no law of incest, there, this law interposes *its* guard by associating greater turpitude—a *mysterious horribleness* with the crime.”†

* Some sentiments and reasonings of Domesticus, on the Levitical law, we are sorry to say, are loose and dangerous in a high degree—such as we hope his own deliberate judgment will decidedly reject. We intended to make some remarks on these, which are rendered unnecessary by the communication of our friend A. H. on this subject, which shall appear in our next number.

† The same views, respecting the reason of the law of incest recorded in the xviii. chap. of Leviticus, are expressed both by Scott and Henry on the passage. The following from Paley’s *Moral Philosophy*, Book iii. chap. v. contains the same doctrine. “In order to preserve chastity in families, and between persons of different sexes, brought up and living together in a state of unreserved intimacy, it is necessary by every method possible to inculcate an abhorrence of incestuous conjunctions; which abhorrence can only be upheld by the absolute reprobation of *all* commerce of the sexes between near relations. Upon this principle, the *marriage* as well as other cohabitations

"Hence it is, the father of a family can lie down comfortably on his bed; he can sleep tranquilly all night; and meet his children in the morning without a shade of suspicion crossing his brow. He can leave his house for weeks, and months, and return again,—confident that all is right in his humble dwelling. He knows that there is a spirit from the seventh heavens residing beneath his roof, watching over each of his beloved charge, breathing around a pure and holy atmosphere, in which a vicious thought cannot live a moment, and where all the virtues love to dwell. He knows little about this heavenly agent: Like the spirit in Job, he cannot discern the form thereof, nor has he seen its face.—*But it is the law of incest!* With what force it operates, may be seen even in the most abandoned profligates. With all their success in eradicating the virtuous feelings of the heart, how seldom do they get the better of that profound reverence for their female near relations, we are speaking of; perhaps not one in a century. The same wretch, who glories in his shame when abroad, is seen in the domestic mansion, and before a sister, conducting himself with the bashful modesty of a virgin."

"The only question to be asked on the subject more immediately before us, is the very plain and intelligible one: *Whether the*

of brothers and sisters, of lineal kindred and of all who usually live in the same family, may be said to be forbidden by the law of nature. The Levitical law prohibits marriage between relations within *three* degrees of kindred; computing the generations through the common ancestor; and accounting affinity the same as consanguinity." This principle is plainly recognised in Lev. xviii. 16, 17.

"There is this peculiarity however," says Dr. Livingston, "in the relation produced by marriage, that it effects the husband and wife alone, so that he becomes related by affinity to her relations and she to his, and it does not, as such, create any new relation between their respective relations, agreeably to the adage, '*affinis mei affinis non est affinis meus.*'" This principle is simple and of easy application, and is expressed with great simplicity and accuracy by the compilers of the Westminster Confession. Yet attempts have not been wanting to darken and perplex, what is clear and simple, by such a sophism as the following: "If a man by marriage becomes one with his wife, and so a brother to her brothers and sisters, &c. therefore, his relatives also become related to the relations of his wife, and cannot intermarry with them, nearer than they can with their own." It may be sufficient to remark here, that the conclusion does not follow from the premises. The relatives of the persons marrying, do not become related, but only the persons themselves, to the two families respectively, i. e. the man to the relatives of his wife, and the woman to those of her husband. This is plainly recognised in common language, which may be considered as expressing the judgment of common sense, on this point: for the relatives of persons united in marriage, do not apply the appellations, brother-in-law and sister-in-law &c. to one another, but only to the persons themselves, who are thus united. But independent of every other consideration, it is enough, that the scriptures recognize no relationship between the relatives of married persons. And in the law, contained in Leviticus, there is no prohibition, either direct or inferential, forbidding marriage between them.—[ED. REL. MON.]

probabilities of close and intimate familiarity between Brother-in-law and Sister-in-law, be such as to demand the interposition of this great moral preservative?"

"How stands the fact?—Let an answer to this, terminate the controversy."

"Here I think there can be but one opinion. We need but open our eyes and look around."

"Is it not a fact, that the moment a person enters into the marriage covenant, he is born as it were into a new family? Does he not become identified with his wife in the affections of those who are connected with her by the ties of nature?—Is he not taken at once to their bosom, and treated in every respect like one of themselves? The door of his Father-in-law's mansion stands as widely open to him, as that of the house where he drew his first breath. He has access at all times,—to all places,—enjoys all the rights, and is permitted to take all the liberties of a brother. He can dandle the younger sisters on his knees; those more advanced, allow him a thousand little freedoms which they would shudder at the thought of allowing to an ordinary acquaintance. *His* mansion in turn is open to them. They enter it with the feeling that they are entering a *second home*, expecting not to see a sister alone, but a *brother*,—one to whom in the hour of calamity they can look up for protection,—to whose arm in the hour of weakness they can cling,—and on whose very bosom they can lean, with thoughts pure as those of the angels who surround the throne of God! What a lovely spectacle my friend is such an association of objects loving and beloved;—such a cluster of families, so cemented together by exchanges of confidence and affectionate offices, that a stranger might live among them for months, and not discover unless he was told, that they were of a different stock! How pleasing to think, that there are thousands of such garden spots in our land, on which the heart of the Philanthropist can repose with wonder and thankfulness, that so much heavenly purity and affection are yet to be found in our miserable world of passion,—war,—and crime!"

"And what is it that secures this happy state of things?—More particularly: What is it establishes this delightful confidence of virgin innocence in the man who sustains no other relationship, than *being the husband of a sister*? The question is easily answered, some may say: 'The young ladies know his character: and they know him to be a man of virtue and principle.' But I assert, that this confidence exists, where they have good reason to *suspect* his general character. It is owing says another, to the con-

viction that being the husband of their sister, there can be no danger *of course*, from an intimacy with him. Very well. But why should this fact have any influence; or why should they trust him, and trust themselves, more than if he were married to another woman? There is but one answer. *He is their Brother.* The law of Incest is exercising a silent and unseen,—but mighty operation: They feel as if it were *impossible* to commit crime with one in such circumstances. The thought is horrible, too bad for utterance!”

“But it may be asked, ‘whether I am not assuming the point in dispute. Do Brothers-in-law and Sisters-in-law feel themselves under this law?’ ‘Is not the frequency of marriage between them, a proof to the contrary?’ In reply, I affirm that they *do* with comparatively few exceptions. Individuals may deny the incestuous character of such conjunctions,—and Church Courts may doubt: But there is a law against them actually existing in the minds and hearts of the community. Fifty out of every hundred, *abhor* them; ninety-nine out of the hundred, exceedingly *dislike* them. Even those who venture to brave public opinion by a marriage of this kind, venture on it with fear and trembling, as if they were doing a ‘*deed without a name.*’ How this general sentiment obtained, is a question foreign to my subject: yet I cannot withhold the remark, that it is beyond all doubt an effect of the salutary regulations of our forefathers, who laid down the safe, wholesome, and perfectly intelligible principle, ‘A man may not marry any of his wife’s kindred, nearer in blood than he may of his own;’ and frowned on every violation of it. Be it remembered also, that the permission of these connections, even by the civil laws, is of modern date. They were always forbidden by the Roman law. They are still forbidden by the law of England; by the laws of most of the nations on the Continent, and by the laws of many of our own Commonwealths,—not to mention the Canon law, which goes so far as to prohibit the marriage of second cousins. In this way has been generated that pious reverence for Affinity, which I have no doubt, is exercising at this moment a blessed influence over thousands.”

“And here is an additional reason, for acting with decision. We are not called upon to *make* law,—but to leave that standing, which already exists,—to ratify and foster a sentiment, which the most of people have sucked in at their Mother’s breast. God forbid, that his church the ‘Perfection of beauty,’ lead the way in casting down one of the bulwarks, which have been erected round the domestic sanctuary! Neither God nor society will thank us for it.”

"But I have been keeping back the strength of my cause. I have been supposing, that the wife's Sisters are only on a footing of *general familiarity* with the husband's family; *i. e.* have free ingress and egress, but at the same time reside under a different roof. Now what is the glaring fact? If we cast our eyes over the land, what do we find more common, than one or more of a wife's sisters actually dwelling in her family,—assisting her in the discharge of her duties,—receiving in turn, that protection which their helplessness calls for. Our fathers of families possess no entailed estates, of which their children are certain in the event of their death. When they die, their *families die*. Often the only legacy they bequeath to their elder children, is the care of the younger,—those especially, whom infirmities or sex disable from providing for themselves. This I assert is so common, that it may be considered a part of our national manners. Accordingly, go where you will, you find some of these children of sorrow, who in the wreck of their fortunes, have cast themselves on the bosom of a *sister*, or *brother*, as their only resource. I should like to see a statistical table, with a column devoted to this subject. I should like even to know, in how many families residing in any particular district of one of our large cities, *sisters-in-law* are domesticated, and as truly parts of the establishment as the wife herself. In this way it is our most kind and gracious Creator fulfils his promise that he will be '*the Father of the Fatherless and the Widow's God.*' He provides them a *home*, where they may tranquilly pass their days, under the broad shade of a sister's love. It is refreshing to see, how (in general) they reward her tenderness,—and far more than pay her for the protection which she extends to them. When she is in health, they are her assistants,—when sick, her nurses. Every thing that love can do, to relieve her under the pressure of conjugal duties is done. The children have two mothers,—the chaste Wife, and the virgin Aunt.—Hence the name of the latter, in the language of ancient Rome,—*Matertera*, 'a sort of Mother,' and richly does she in most instances deserve the epithet. It not seldom happens, her heart takes such deep root in the little spot to which Providence has transplanted her,—so completely do her interests become identified with her sister's, and those of the little prattlers, whom she has watched over and warmed in the bosom, so long, that she has almost forgotten they are not her own,—that she refuses the most brilliant offers of an independent establishment, to live and die with the objects of her affection!"

"Again must I ask, what produces all this? What is it in the first place, can persuade the wife to receive into the family, a

stranger to her husband, of whose unconquerable virtue to say the least she has no proof, induces her to put this stranger at once on a footing of perfect familiarity, repose in her unlimited confidence, leave the house to her sole direction for weeks and months, while she is lying on her sick bed, confident that all is going well on each side of her? What is it in the next place, enables the sister-in-law to throw herself with confidence in this new circle, —to become domesticated in it,—to feel pure and happy and affectionate,—to love all, and to love more and more, till her very soul is melted into the souls of those around her? What lastly, enables the husband, no matter how young and fair the object that is continually flitting before him, employed in offices of kindness,—to regard her with love indeed, but with the love of Plato's disembodied spirits,—as pure, as fervent, and as seraphic? Talk not to me of a natural sense of propriety. It is idle. The true Guardian Genius is the *Law of Incest*, which unknown to the parties themselves, is watching and casting its ample shield about them, in their sleeping and waking—in their eating and drinking,—in their public walks,—and in the darkest retreats of the family mansion. Abolish this law; expel this household God: Let it be publicly and distinctly understood that a sister-in-law, is no more than *any other* female, and to do this, you need only let the parties understand that after the death of the present wife *they may marry*; what will follow? Why, I will tell you Sir,* what will follow. We shall hear by and by, tales that will make our ears to tingle. We shall hear from this part of the country,—and that part,—and a third part, of the dreadful misfortune that happened in such a family: We shall hear of a lovely and accomplished girl, rushing as she thought to an asylum opened to her by Heaven itself;—and finding but too late, that she had fallen into the clutches of a demon. We shall hear of a wife dying with a broken heart, her children weeping about her bed, knowing not well what has taken place,—yet feeling that some desolating whirlwind has come over them! Few cases of this kind I acknowledge have occurred hitherto, though some have.† But let us not be lulled into a false security. The reason of their infrequency, is not the general virtue of the community, but the existence of that wholesome feeling we lately adverted to, which has been the fruit of that very institution, which some

* Domesticus writes in the form of a "Letter to a clergyman of the Presbyterian church," which accounts for the mode of expression frequently used.—
[Ed.]

† Four are known to the writer, three of which are in their details, too harrowing even for tragedy.

well meaning, but I do not think *far seeing* people are attempting to destroy."

"These would be the first consequences of the measure. Let us follow it a little farther, and see the *ultimate* issues. What will be the effect of such accounts, on the public mind, respecting the safety of familiar intercourse between brother-in-law and sister-in-law? What especially will be their effect on *Wives*? Can any one doubt, that a prodigious revolution will be wrought in their mode of thinking and acting? The reason of that hearty welcome which they give to their destitute sisters, is as we have already observed, the confidence that no harm can possibly follow. The flame of sisterly affection burns bright, and clear,—without being damped by one unfriendly suspicion. But now the aspect of things is entirely altered. The good lady, begins to think, that peradventure she has introduced a rival into the family circle! She will take shrewd notice of her sister's conduct. She will scan her husband's glances,—and mark as accurately every tone of his voice, as a grocer does the chinking of a suspicious dollar. The charm in short is broken. The poor sister is metamorphosed into a serpent, who when a little more thawed,—will sting its benefactor to death, and gladly is the first opportunity embraced of casting her out to the tempest, from which she had a little before, been hospitably rescued. This may be strong language; but I appeal to your good sense Sir, and ask, whether it be *too* strong; whether the certain operation of the state of things I am supposing, will not be the turning of many an orphan sister out of doors? It *must* be so. In numberless instances it *ought* to be so, for reasons which need not be mentioned: and in the most favourable case a prudent woman will exercise her hospitality with great caution and reserve."

"Thus two evils stare us in the face; 1st. There would be frequent instances of family impurity; and 2dly. these by a natural reaction on married women, would infuse coldness and distrust towards female relatives: The doors would be shut of that asylum which Providence has appointed for the most interesting class of our fellow beings. No kindness then is shewn to a female, in permitting her to marry her sister's husband. On the contrary it is real *cruelty*, as few will ever have the opportunity of forming this connection, and thousands will suffer, because it is made lawful."

"I have sometimes heard it alledged as an argument for such marriages, that women have been known, who earnestly recommended a sister to their husbands, in the event of their death.—Nay a gentleman once informed me, he knew a case, where the dying wife *solemnly adjured* her husband; adding that if he did

net take the oath, she could not rest in her grave. I confess, I have always seen in such requests, a powerful corroboration of my reasonings. The dying wife is anxious that the husband marry her sister. Good! Then this dying wife must be presumed to love this sister *tenderly*,—to put *entire confidence* in her as one who will faithfully discharge the duty of Mother to her babes.—And how was this love and confidence produced? Undoubtedly, by long observation and experience. It is not a *Sister as such*, it is not *any Sister* she recommends; but one who has probably resided under her roof,—with whom she has long been in habits of tender intimacy,—and whom she knows, (at least this is her thought) to the heart's-core. Now I affirm, that if at the outset, this sister had been considered as in no sense a sister of the husband, and attentions to her not more criminal than to a stranger,—the opportunity of generating such kindly feelings, would probably never have been afforded. She would *not have been admitted to the family*; or if admitted, the possibility of what I need not mention, would be always present to the imagination of the wife, and prevent her from doing justice to the other's merit. To make this evident, I will ask a single question. Would this dying wife make the request,—if she knew that for the last two or three years her husband and sister had been deliberating on the subject *themselves*?"

"Can any one hesitate a moment to acknowledge, that it is from having experienced *the benefit* of the law of Incest during their *whole matrimonial life*, women who make these requests, are so anxious on their death bed to break it? They are *Women* not philosophers; that is our excuse for them: Otherwise they would not sit under the shade, and enjoy the fruits of a venerable old tree for ten,—twenty—or thirty years, and shew their gratitude on a death bed, by solemnly adjuring their husbands to cut it down. I am bold to say, that when it becomes fashionable for men to marry their sisters-in-law,—husbands will cease to be troubled with the dying requests of wives on this subject."

Domesticus concludes his letter in the following language, in which he deprecates any alteration in the Confession of the Presbyterian church, on this subject.

"I fondly hope, the various Presbyteries of the Church will support the good old regulations of our forefathers, and shew,—that if there be a spirit abroad, delighting in innovation, and in its rage for improvement sparing not the most sacred and accredited institutions,—this spirit has not obtained the mastery in *their* walls. I hope above all, that they will not tamper with foundation stones of the social fabric,—nor cut away what cannot be in-

jarious, and is certainly safe. Such I think Sir, is the prohibition of marriage between a husband and his wife's sister. It *may* do good. It *cannot* do harm. It *has* done good. It did good before we were born,—it is doing good *now*,—and I hope will be spared to do good, when we are no more."

Thus have we endeavoured to set before our readers a full view of the argument, on this subject, from the word of God, and from expediency. From either it is, in our view, clear and convincing; from both combined, we think it irresistible by every unbiassed mind. Is this then, an ordinance of God, the violation of which has brought down his heaviest judgments on the heathen? Is the marriage in question, by the law of God, *incest*, a crime of which the Corinthian church was required to clear herself, by casting out the incestuous person? and shall a christian church in our day hesitate about the path of duty, in cases of the same nature, and thus make herself a partaker of such crimes? The criminal wavering and indecision of some churches, on this subject, in violation of their own standards, have, we fear, done much injury, and brought much guilt and misery* on the land. And yet, it is now seriously proposed, to erase the law from these standards, and thus *legalize* a crime which the word of God so strongly condemns. On the same principle, might we erase every law from the statute book, and then, truly, we should have a virtuous community; for, "where no law is, there is no transgression." Let it be remembered, however, that no body of men can remove this law from the statute book of God, nor give to the violation of it any other character, in his sight, than he has given to it. They may indeed set open the flood gates of iniquity, and lull to sleep the consciences of transgressors, in a course of sin, but for all these things, the righteous Lord will dispense righteous judgment. Still, however, should the course proposed take effect, it can scarcely be worse, and it will be vastly more consistent, than that which has, for some time past, marked the proceedings of the Presbyterian church, on this subject.—For our own part we had no idea, till lately, and perhaps we are not yet fully informed, of the extent to which the evil has abounded in that body, and which, there cannot be a doubt, has been fostered by the indecision of her courts, respecting it. Dr. Ely, in a late number of the *Philadelphian*, has published, "Considerations on the proposed erasure," the sum and amount of which, is this,—that as there are some who think that the marriages in question, are not forbidden in the scriptures; others, that they are not so clearly forbidden, as to require the excom-

* See note, page 523.

munication of those who contract them, and as the Confession does not condemn the eating of opium and the free use of tobacco and whiskey, which many think to be wrong, as well as the marrying of a deceased wife's sister; and above all, as the Presbyterian church has had a great deal of trouble with appeals on this subject, about the decision of which her ministers cannot agree, and are still likely to be troubled in the same way, so long as this troublesome clause stands in her Confession; therefore, it were better it should be erased!

By way of showing how difficult it has been for the Assembly to agree, in cases of this kind, Dr. E. cites *Eight* different cases from the Records of the Assembly, from 1797 to 1824, brought before that body, in all of which it appears they have been greatly perplexed to know what it was best to do; that is, whether or not they should judge according to their standards, which they solemnly declare they believe to be founded on the word of God; for, say they, "So great diversity of opinion exists on such questions in different parts of the church, that no absolute rule can be enjoined with regard to them, which shall be universally binding and consistent with the peace of the church." Such cases consequently they have generally left "to the inferior judicatories, under their care, to act according to their own best lights, and the circumstances in which they find themselves placed."—Now what are we to think, what is the church at large, and what is the world to think, when it is known, that one of the cases thus disposed of, is one expressly forbidden IN SO MANY WORDS, (Lev. xviii. 16.) viz. a man's marrying his brother's wife? We give the extract respecting this case entire, as furnished by Dr. Ely.

"In 1805, W. A. appealed from a decision of the Synod of Pittsburgh to the Assembly. He had married his *brother's widow*. His character in other respects was fair, and exemplary. The Synod pronounced his marriage unlawful: and the Assembly Resolved, that, 'Whereas frequent decisions on marriages of a similar nature have been given by the late Synod of New-York and Philadelphia, and by the General Assembly; and whereas it has appeared on these occasions, that while such marriages are offensive to some, to others they appear lawful,—Therefore this Assembly consider the subject doubtful and delicate, and do not think it expedient to express any opinion on the decision of the Synod of Pittsburgh, in the present case. But in conformity to a decision made by last Assembly, on a marriage somewhat similar, this General Assembly refers the case of Mr. A. to the session of the church of Rocky Spring, or that of any other in which

he may be; and leave it to their decision to act according to their own best lights, and the circumstances in which they find themselves placed." *Records of Assembly*, vol. ii. p. 122.

What, we would ask, would be received as evidence, that such marriages are contrary to the law of God, when the express testimony of God himself, in his law, is disregarded? Leaving those whom it concerns, to answer this question, we conclude the subject, for the present, by subjoining some just and pertinent remarks on Dr. Ely's paper, and the conduct of the Assembly as related by him, by a West Jerseyman, in the *Philadelphian* of the 16th ultimo, entitled, "Thoughts on the Marriage Question."

"This question has been discussed by the Rev. DR. ELY, in the *Philadelphian* of the 2d inst. But he has not arrived at that conclusion, which I judge to be consistent with the word of God. I do not mean to enter the lists of controversy, but as I shall be under the necessity of voting in Presbytery upon this question, and as I should like to see unanimity prevalent among our brethren upon this point, both to show why I differ from my respected brother, and to contribute my mite towards producing the unanimity, which I desire, I shall briefly state my reasons for thinking that the section in question should *not* be erased.

I am, sir, a great admirer of *good* old things, and of good old men. I have, therefore a very considerable degree of veneration for our Confession, and for the learned and pious men who produced it. Yet my reverence for one or the other is not so great, as to lead me to an implicit adoption of their errors. When I solemnly professed my reception and adoption of the Confession of Faith, as containing the system of doctrine taught in Scripture, I *believed* it to contain that system of divine truth, and as yet I see no reason to alter my opinion. I cannot help considering the past indecision of the General Assembly as in a degree dishonourable to it, and as occasioning all that trouble respecting cases of marriage within the degrees of affinity interdicted by the 4th sect. of Chap. xxiv., of which complaint has been made, and which is even offered as a reason for its erasure. I conceive, but I may be mistaken, that the General Assembly had no right to act without decision, on a point which their Confession of Faith had decided. Every member of that Assembly had virtually said in the presence of God and man, at his ordination, 'I believe it to be consistent with the word of God, that the man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own, nor the woman of her husband's kindred nearer in blood than of her own.' With the weight of this solemn avowal upon them, how could they consistently declare it to be 'a doubtful

and delicate subject and inexpedient to express an opinion upon it,' when their opinion lay open, in the Confession of Faith, to the world, and their avowed adherence to that opinion was recorded in heaven? I apprehend that they had no right to express indecision in a particular case, when the general principle, involving a decision of all particular cases, was not contested. If they had any doubt of the general principle, they ought to have declared their doubt, and resorted to the measure which has been at last adopted. But if they had acted upon the principle firmly, which they were certainly by their adoption of the Confession of Faith, obliged to do, there could have been no future difficulty; for every man and woman then would have known, that marriage within the interdicted degrees, cut them off, without remedy, from our communion. Nor could any one reasonably complain of this. If a person desire to be a member of a society, he certainly ought to reckon it no hardship to conform to its rules.

But—'to the Law and the testimony;' if the clause in question be contrary to the word of God, or not substantially contained in that word, let it be torn from the leaf, which it has occupied undisturbed for ages; but if it be an echo of the voice of God, let no hand be lifted up with sacrilegious violence against it."

Then after giving an outline of the argument from Scripture, he concludes by saying,

"This principle of limitation [viz. that when the law forbids marriage in any specified relationship it forbids it to all within the same degree] is as easy as it is necessary and legitimate. It breathes the very spirit, and embraces fully, the intention of the law. It is the principle which guided the venerable compilers of the Confession of Faith, when they drew up the clause of the xxivth Chapter, now in question. I hope we shall not recede from it; and I hope the clause will remain where it has stood unmolested for nearly two hundred years. I hope it will never be said that the American clergy have less respect for the law of God than the civilians of Europe, and the monks of the dark ages. Nay, I hope, that instead of relaxing by little and little, the reins of morals, discipline, and doctrine, we shall be animated by a growing watchfulness and zeal for the purity of the church, the welfare of souls, and the glory of our covenant God.

Selections.

SIGNS OF A LIVING OR GROWING CHRISTIAN.

From a valuable author of the last century.

Sign 1. When your chief delight is with the saints, especially them that excel in virtue.

2. When the smittings of the righteous are not a burden to you, and you can hear of your faults with affectionate attention.

3. When Jesus Christ, in the midst of temptation, is more to you than all the world.

4. When reproach for Christ, makes you not ashamed of Christ.

5. When wandering thoughts in time of duty find less entertainment than formerly.

6. When length and standing in the profession of Christianity, work increase of hatred to all sin.

7. When you carry about with you a constant jealousy over your own heart, that it turn not aside from God and goodness.

8. When every known new mercy begets new thankfulness, and that with delight.

9. When known calamity in God's house begets deep sorrow in your heart.

10. When God's afflicting you for your sins makes you love God the better.

11. When the same care and travail you at first laboured in to get Christ, is as much if not more laboured in to keep Christ.

12. When a feeling sense of the peace and edification of the church of God lies so near your heart that you can prefer it above your chief concerns.

13. When under deep distress or languishing, the word of God is precious to you.

14. When any condition, though in itself mean, as it comes from God, is most welcome.

15. When the peace of Christ's house begets chief joy in your heart.

16. When chief care to avoid all sin is as truly occasioned through fear of dishonouring God, and incurring his present displeasure, as *wrath to come*.

17. When the least apprehension of God's withdrawing, makes you seek him more earnestly in such ways wherein he will be found.

18. When every company is burdensome to you, that is not designing your Father's glory, but derogating therefrom.

19. When the sins of others come so near your heart, that you walk sadly to see such persons transgress God's commands.

20. When the light of your understanding grows more strong to your making judgment of spiritual things according to God's word.

21. When bitter things become sweet to you, as they are squared by, and founded on the will of God.

22. When the path of the humble is so delightful, that you would rather be with them, than in the tents of the ungodly.

23. When your pity is such to perishing people, that you cannot but weep at the thoughts of their ruin.

24. When the yoke of self-denial imposed by Christ Jesus, is not grievous, but pleasant to you.

25. When the force of resurrection and judgment to come, lies so close at your heart, that it makes you answer every call of Christ to do or suffer cheerfully.

26. When *increase* of time in Christ's acquaintance, works *increase* of delight in communion with Christ.

27. When in the walk of faith you are more frequent, and less depend upon walking by sense.

28. When the majesty of the great God, considering how visible you are in his sight, hath an awful prevalence upon your heart.

29. When you are at open war and constant hostility with bosom sin, as displeasing to God, and forbidden by his law.

30. When you have a thirsting care to get the power of godliness in your heart, rather than the form of godliness in the head or outward profession.

31. When the worship of God agreeable to his word, is highly prized and faithfully practiced, in the worst of times.

32. When the soul is more hungry for the word of God, than the body is for temporal food.

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE OF FAITH.

This short treatise was written by the pious Professor FRANKEN, the founder of the celebrated Orphan House at Halle, in Germany. It was translated from the original German into low Dutch; and thence into English, for the Christian's Magazine.

This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.—John xvii. 3.

This is the way of faith by which I live, the truth which I have learned from the word of God, and which the holy Ghost has sealed upon my heart. This is the race ground upon which I run, where I am preserved from every false path, and shall obtain the prize of life.

I acknowledge myself to be a poor and wretched worm; I know that, by my original and actual sins, I have deserved the wrath of God, and am justly obnoxious to temporal death and eternal damnation.

But the son of God has given himself for me, and reconciled me to the Father by his blood, so that God doth not impute my sins to me; but imputes for my justification the righteousness of his only begotten son, which I receive by faith in his name.

That faith by which I am truly justified is of the operation of the holy Ghost, who has filled my breast with faith.

In this my justification I have found peace with God. I am a child of God, and I am comforted while I rejoice in his grace. I am confident that I shall never see nor taste death, but that I have eternal life, and am passed from death to life.

Since God has thus graciously received me by faith in his Son Jesus, I am not justified at one time and condemned at another; but I am always and constantly in the grace of God, and have in my heart the witness of the holy Spirit to my adoption of God.

I do not at all consider myself to be free from faults and infirmities; yea, I well know that those which God has discovered to my view cannot be numbered, and I firmly believe that those which I do not see are more numerous; yet since I am in Christ Jesus and he is in me, these my faults and infirmities are not imputed to me, but God is forbearing and forgiving towards me as a father with his child.

Notwithstanding, his grace doth not render me careless, but excites me daily to be more and more renewed in the spirit of my mind.

God, who produces whatever is good in me, makes a filial fear to reside in my heart, and he hath implanted an awful reverence for his holy majesty, which preserves me from sinning, or turning his grace into lasciviousness.

He purgeth me as a branch of the vine, that I continually bear more fruit.

I am actually cleansed by the word which Jesus Christ hath spoken, and which I have believed. This is not a mere imagination or false conclusion, for Christ hath truly loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood; my salvation which comprises the pardon of my sins, is well ordered and sure.

God has let me feel my depravity, and has given me grace to acknowledge my natural pollution and inability. By this he hath magnified the riches of his mercy in working faith in my wicked heart.

What I have thus seen, and heard, and learned, by spiritual experience, is more certain and sure to me, than what I see with my eyes, or hear with my ears, or touch with my hands.

God himself has taught me clearly to distinguish between light and darkness, imagination and reality.

But God is not only faithful to forgive our sins, but also just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Therefore I confess my sins and pollution before him, and desire continually to be more and more purified.

I consequently fight against sin, and crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; yet I cannot do this in my own strength, but through the Holy Ghost, who dwells and works in me.

My beginning, and progress, and ending, is by faith in Jesus.

While I am conscious of my utter inability, and acknowledge that I can of myself do nothing but sin; when I feel that I cannot of myself draw near to God and enjoy his communion, but depend wholly upon his grace, and look to the Lamb of God who bore my sins, and came through his blood to the Father; then a new power is communicated to me, and I feel faith in my heart as a divine light and fire; I taste the love of Christ; and the new man grows as "a good tree in its verdure," which blossoms, diffuses its fragrance, and produces fruit acceptable to God and man.

I do not seek to be justified in one way, and sanctified in another. I have but one way, that is Christ; who is the way, the truth, and the life.

As I cleave to nothing but Christ, when I plead for the pardon of my sins, so I cleave alone to him, and turn in simplicity and sincerity to his grace and power, when I strive to increase in faith, in love, and hope.

Yea, I need nothing more to enable me to stand firmly in the grace received, and the renewed principle which the Son of God has given me, (to know him that is true, and to continue in him who is true:) in this way the work of God is perfected in me; for God alone, without my aid, is the author and finisher of his own work.

When I yield myself to be formed by him as an infant, and cease to oppose his Spirit, he then works in me both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure.

But it is not his will that I should become negligent, and sink from a sense of my dependence, into carelessness and sloth: I may not, nor do I seek rest and peace in myself; for this would produce backsliding, and I should thereby imperceptibly withdraw from his divine and blessed influences.

His living and life-giving Spirit worketh always in his people, and happy are they who eagerly drink the vivifying stream, and turn not away from the waters of life.

The Spirit fatigues none by his sanctifying influences. His operations are as a still small voice, and, through strength communicated by him, it is not difficult for a soul, justified in the blood of Jesus, to rise upon the wings of faith and love.

To the humble, the Lord is friendly; for the graces of the Holy Ghost are richly dispensed to contrite hearts.

But true humility is grounded and rooted in that justification which proceeds from grace.

While the sinner acknowledges no merit in himself, but finds all in Christ, his soul will be filled with heavenly peace; he will be quickened and strengthened in God; but as soon as his heart is puffed up, and whenever he ceases to seek and find his happiness exclusively in the divine atonement, he treads a path of error, strewn with anxiety and danger.

Nevertheless, God has his appointed seasons for the trial and humiliation of his people; and although the believer may not depart from the right way, he must expect to pass through many temptations and tribulations, that the secret depravity of his own heart may be revealed to him.

But, ah! how readily we deviate from the right and narrow way! how speedily objects occur to the mind, by which the believer, before he is aware of his danger, is drawn from the simplicity of his filial exercises! while he flatters himself with having obtained a better frame of mind, he often slides back imperceptibly from the gospel to the law.

The gospel has a divine simplicity; and infuses into the soul of a believer a benevolence towards all men, arising out of his temper and privileges as a child of God. The gospel is perspicuous; it is a shining light, a pure stream of peace; it gives rest from our own righteousness; it introduces us to the enjoyment of God, and puts us in the possession of his salvation. Blessed is the man who is not made ashamed of his hope; a shame which they must experience who do not look alone to Christ for redemption, while they follow the doctrines and examples of men instead of the Saviour. A shame that will assuredly be experienced whenever, with lofty flights the unwary believer indulges in spiritual pride, and esteems his growth in grace greater than it actually is. No man, by any pretensions or efforts can add one cubit to his stature; and the new man has also determinate dimensions.

Nature prefers her own way, and discerns no other for obtaining happiness and perfection, than by our own works, exertions, and righteousness: but the way of God is directly the reverse.

He brings down our pride, reduces our sufficiency to nothing, that he himself may be all in all.

All this is comprised in that one word: he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. Lord Jesus! lead me by thy good Spirit in a plain path.

ON THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S SATISFACTION.

There are many who hold in great contempt, and treat with much asperity, the kindred doctrines of particular election and particular redemption, as embraced by the Calvinist. They, on the contrary teach, that Christ died for the sins of all and every man in the whole world; and yet they admit that multitudes, notwithstanding his dying for them, do eternally perish. Without pressing any general argument on this subject, we offer, for their consideration, the following *dilemma*, from Dr. OWEN'S treatise, entitled, *Salus electorum, sanguis Jesu*; or, *the death of Death in the death of Christ*: book i. ch. 3. p. 22, 23. Edinburgh 1755. 12mo.

"God imposeth his wrath due unto, and Christ underwent the pains of hell for, either all the sins of all men; or all the sins of some men; or some sins of all men. If the last, some sins of all men; then have all men some sins to answer for, and so shall no man be saved; for if God *should enter into judgment* with us, though it were with all mankind, for one sin, *no man living should be justified in his sight*. Psalm cxliii. 2. *If the Lord should mark iniquities, who shall stand?* Psalm cxxx. 3. We might all go to cast all that we have "to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty." Isaiah ii. 20, 21. If the second, that is which we affirm; that Christ in their stead, and room, suffered for all the sins of all the elect in the world. If the first, why then are not all freed from the punishment of all their sins? You will say, because of their unbelief; they will not believe. But this unbelief, is it a sin, or not? If not, why should they be punished for it? If it be, then Christ underwent the punishment due to it, or not: If so, then why must that hinder them more than their other sins for which he died, from partaking of the fruit of his death? If he did not, then did he not die for all their sins. Let them choose which part they will."

The work from which the above is selected, we take this opportunity of recommending to all those who wish to see that weighty argment concerning the "redemption and reconciliation

that is in the blood of Christ," handled with much ability and scriptural learning. They will meet, as in almost all the volumes of that pre-eminent divine, with a happy illustration of difficult passages in holy writ, and the most conclusive reasoning on the side of those precious truths for which he was the advocate: as well as the most close discussion of objections. We recommend the perusal of his doctrinal and expository works, the rather, as of late years, some men, very little acquainted with them, have permitted themselves to speak contemptuously of Dr. OWEN.—Had they lived in his time, or he in theirs, and had they been so unhappy as to engage him, they would probably have found, what their superiors both in talents and literature who made the experiment, found, that in most cases, his grasp was death.—*Christian's Magazine.*

Select Religious Intelligence.

ALBANY COUNTY BIBLE SOCIETY.

At the Anniversary meeting of the Albany Bible Society, held on the 13th of March, 1827, the Board of Managers Presented to the Society the following Report:

It is to be regreted, that in reviewing the proceedings of the Society during the past year, there are not those indications of vigour and extensive usefulness which the local situation of the Society might encourage a friend of the distribution of the Holy Scriptures to expect. This consideration is, indeed, in part relieved, by the reflection, that in the number of copies of the Bible actually distributed, some good has been done in promoting the salutary and holy designs of that book. It appears that during the past year, \$300 have been remitted to the American Bible Society, and 267 copies of the Bible entire, and 105 copies of the New Testament separately, have been distributed. To this circumstance, also, it may be interesting to add, that the whole number distributed since the organization of the Society, amounts to about 6,000 Bibles and 2,500 Testaments, a fact of a consolatory nature, when it is remembered, that, but for the aid thus afforded by the Society, nearly a corresponding number of families and individuals would have remained destitute of so important a means of religious instruction.

The very fact indeed of the necessity of such institutions and their utility in staying the progress of ignorance, error and vice, presents a painful and lamentable view to our minds. It indicates an extensive prevalence of want of knowledge on the most important of all subjects, and in a large proportion of instances, a criminal and dangerous indifference, with respect to the attainment of that knowledge; a trait in the moral character of society, wherever it exists, in a high degree affecting. This circumstance, together with the comparatively limited influence of the Society, the Board offer as an apology for closing their Report with the suggestion of the importance of adopting some measures to add to the numbers of the Society, and by increasing its influence in that direction, to extend the sphere of its usefulness.

The Albany Bible Society in acc't with E. F. Backus, Treasurer.

1826.

CR.

Feb.	By balance in the Treasury from last account,	\$410.80
July	By collection in the North Dutch Church, Albany,	67.18
	(Carried forward.)	

	(Brought forward,)	\$477.98
By 31 annuities,		62.00
By donation from H. Truax,		2.00
By 3 do. from Knox Auxiliary Society,		9.00
Aug. By donation and annuity,		2.50
Sept, By interest from Am. Bible Society for 2 years,		126.00
1827, Feb. By 46 annuities, 92.00.—1 subscription, 2,		94.00
March, By collection 1st Presbyterian church, Albany,		78.01
By do. Associate Presbyterian church,		10.00
Total,		\$961.49

1826.	DR.	
July, To the amount remitted to American Bible Society,		\$300.00
To commission paid for collecting,		2.90
Sept 1, To cash paid for Bibles,		84.00
" 30, do. do.		200.00
1827, Jan. To cash paid for freight, cartage, and postage,		1.75

Total, \$588.65
Balance in the Treasury, \$271.84

Published by order of the Society.

JAMES MARTIN, *Secretary.*

SUPPORT OF THE METHODIST CLERGY.

It is very popular among certain denominations to declaim with great vehemence, both in public and private, against what are called "salary ministers;" and to show them off to better advantage, they are frequently contrasted with Methodist Preachers, who receive only a hundred dollars a year. They must, of course be "greedy dogs, these salary ministers, who require of their congregations four or five hundred dollars a year for doing little more than preaching two sermons a week! while their brethren preach five times as many sermons for a fifth part of the sum." This is a most glaring inequality. How do these poor men live? The following will throw some light on the subject, and show how a man, with a family, can live on a hundred dollars a year.

A writer in the first volume of the *Philadelphian* proposes, for consideration, as a regular plan for ministerial support, in the Presbyterian church, "the liberal system of our Methodist brethren in this respect, concerning which," he says "there is much ignorance in the world, many believing or supposing that *their* servants in the sacred ministry are much stinted and straitened in their supplies, whereas, on the contrary and much to their credit, no denomination of Christian ministers, it is believed, are *on an average* better supported or receive more for their services, as will abundantly appear from the following statement made in the *Religious Intelligencer* of May, 1823, by one who preached among them. It shows what would be the salary of a preacher having a wife and four children, in his own words: "My wife, \$100; Myself, \$100; Board \$5 per week. \$260; Four children, \$17 each annually, \$68;—\$528; In addition to the above I should have rent and firewood, worth at least \$100;—Total \$628.

Supposing instead of four children he should have six, half of them above seven years of age and the remainder under that number of years, then according to the liberal provisions of their discipline, which says "each child of a travelling preacher shall be allowed \$16 annually to the age of seven years, and \$24 annually from the age of seven to fourteen years," then instead of an allowance of \$68 for children, it would be \$120. The sum total in this case would be \$690. This is at least equal to the support received by the Presbyterian ministers, and in our churches generally it is doubtful whether it would average \$500."

DEATH OF MINISTERS OF THE CHUUCH OF SCOTLAND.

It is remarkable, that the following ministers of the church of Scotland, have died at so advanced ages, within a few weeks of the 1st of December, 1826.

	age.	year of ministry.
Rev. Dr. Peebles, (Newton Air,)	74,	49.
Rev. Dr. Simmie, (Rothsemay,)	80,	51.
Rev. Dr. Cruden, (Nigg,)	80,	57.
Rev. Dr. Dobbie, (Linthgow,)	81,	54.
Rev. Mr. Scott, (Stitchel,)	83,	54.
Rev. Mr. M'Gowan, (Dalry,)	80,	43.

These clergymen, were the fathers of their respective Presbyteries, and highly esteemed as useful and respectable ministers.

Summary of Religious Intelligence.

Our most important intelligence for this month, is furnished by letters from Mr. Goodell, dated from Beyroot in the end of September and beginning of October last two months later than any previous intelligence. Asaad Shidiah, was still alive and in prison, where he had been confined and ill treated for more than six months on account of his embracing the Protestant faith. This is strong evidence of his steadfastness in his profession, when his youth is considered, and that a mere verbal acknowledgement of the Catholic faith would set him at liberty. A long and very interesting statement has been made by him, containing the history of his acquaintance with the Missionaries, the means by which he was brought to renounce the Catholic religion and embrace his present sentiments, and the efforts made, as yet in vain, to bring him back to the church of Rome. We give the following extract from the close of this statement, from which it appears, that this church, long ago drunk with the blood of the saints, is as much a persecutor as ever where she has it in her power.

"One day after this, he [the Patriarch Joseph] called me to his presence and began to threaten me in the most unusual manner. I said, 'What do you wish of me, your reverence? What have I done, and what would you have me do? What is my sin, except that I conversed with some individuals, shewing them the errors of the church of Rome?' Then he requested me again, to say, that I believed as did that church, and said, grasping me firmly by the chin, 'see how I will take you if you do not repent.' I begged him to appoint some one to shew me the truth, by way of discussion, but he would not, and continued expressing his own sentiment, that we are bound to hold fast to the church, even to such a length, that if she should even reject the Gospel, we should reject it too.

And here I wish to say a word to every reader that regards and loves the truth; how does such doctrine appear to you? and how could I believe in all which the Romish church holds, without *knowing* all of it? and how could I say without a lie, that I believe, when I do not believe?

When I saw the Patriarch breaking out with an exceeding loud and unusual voice, I was afraid that I should be found among 'the fearful,' (Rev. xxi. 8.) and rose to depart. When I reached the door, I turned and said to him, 'I will hold fast the religion of Jesus Christ, and I am ready for the sake of it to shed my blood; and though you should all become infidels, yet will not I;' and so left the room."

Mr. Goodell also states, that when Mr. King set out on his return to this country, on account of his feeble state of health, "he left a *Farewell Letter* to the people of Syria. This contained a testimony to the great truths of the gospel. A translation of this letter was sent to Constantinople, with copious marginal references to scripture proofs prepared by Mr. Goodell. This letter excited great commotion among the *Armenians*, 100,000 of whom reside in that city and neighborhood. A general meeting of the monks, priests and patriarchs of that church was held; attended also by the Greek patriarch of

Constantinople and the Greek patriarch of Jerusalem, who happened to be then in the city. Mr. King's letter was read, and discussed at length, in that meeting. The long neglected Bible was produced in the conclave, and the references consulted. The consequence was, a division in the assembly, and a warm discussion of the practices of their own church. But eventually several resolutions were passed, which clearly show that strong convictions of truth had seized on the minds of a major part; and that light has dawned, even upon the ecclesiastics of the Armenian Church, which must, ere long, subvert the fabric of their superstition. The substance of the resolutions is, that the Patriarch should dismiss the monks and priests from the Convent at Jerusalem, and appoint a few persons in their places who have been married but are widowers; that no new monks or priests be appointed for twenty-five years; that no women or boys go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; that men who go should not be permitted to remain there more than four days; and that they no more witness 'the pretended miracle of the holy fire.'"

This Mission has been established little more than six years. Levi Parsons, from this country, was the first that went out professedly with that object.

SOUTH SEA ISLANDS.—Information has recently arrived, that the natives of these Islands, are afflicted with a species of plague, "extremely virulent and fatal in its nature, and rapid in its progress. Of this disorder, many of the inhabitants of Tahaita and Ulitea had been carried off, and others were dying daily. Capt. B. was informed by two English gentlemen, who had just arrived from the last mentioned island, that the distemper was then raging in an extraordinary manner; that at Taheita there were ten dead bodies found in one house. As soon as one member of a family was attacked, the others abandoned the unfortunate victim to his fate. This distemper did not affect the white residents. Although the contagion had not reached Hubeina, the natives were apprehensive of its approach.

A similar distemper, we believe, says the editor, many years since, nearly exterminated the Indian population of Nantucket."

LIBERIA.—Letters from Liberia to the 6th December, furnish authentic intelligence of the prosperous state of the colony, its increasing usefulness, and of the pacific disposition of the natives. The Brig Doris, is to sail immediately, with from 80 to 90 passengers. The whole number, is said to be industrious and promising, and calculated to be useful to the colony. About one half of them, have been under the care and protection of the Friends, who contributed \$800 to the expedition.

View of Public Affairs.

Our notices of foreign affairs are crowded out; they are however, unimportant, and much the same as in our last.

AMERICA.

The population of Upper Canada, according to the census lately taken, is 164,000, not equal to the population of New-York city, by several thousands.

SOUTH AMERICA.—The southern states, (says Niles' Register,) with the exception of Mexico, in which things are not altogether quiet, are much disturbed—business is unsettled and property insecure. They are all feverish—through factions,—producing revolts, rebellions or revolutions. The war between Brazil and Buenos Ayres continues. Chili and Peru are said to be exceedingly exhausted, through the indolence or mis-management of the people. We are anxious to learn what is the present condition and probable fate of Colombia, in consequence of Bolivar's resignation. Bad, indeed, must be the state of a people when so much depends, or seems to depend, on the conduct of one man. It certainly shows us that republican principles are but little understood. We yet hope that Bolivar is honest; but think that he ought not to have retired just now. There is a "crisis."

UNITED STATES.—The appropriations made by Congress, during its last session, as appears from official documents, amount to \$11,315,568 94.

State of New-York. MORGAN.—Governor Clinton has issued a third proclamation, offering \$1,000 reward for the discovery of Morgan, if alive—and, if murdered, \$2,000 for the discovery of the offender or offenders, and a free pardon to any accomplice or co-operator, who shall make a discovery of the offender or offenders. The committee appointed by the Assembly, on the petition from the west relative to the Morgan affair, reported on the 6th inst.—They state that they have, after a full examination of the subject, felt themselves surrounded by embarrassments on every side. The report which is too long to publish, concludes thus :

Aware that this transaction has called forth the deep and merited indignation of a people jealous in the protection of those liberties so dearly bought, and that are so firmly guarded by the constitution and laws of our country, as sacred in the humble citizen as in those clothed with the highest powers that freemen can bestow, your committee have anxiously endeavoured to recommend such means as in their view would most conduce to the arrest and conviction of those who have been actors in this scene which we hope is and will remain unparalleled in the history of our country.

They therefore introduce the following resolutions :

Whereas it appears that one William Morgan a citizen of this state, was in the month of September last, forcibly and unlawfully taken from the village of Canandaigua, in the county of Ontario, since which period all attempts to discover the fate of said Morgan, have proved unavailing. Therefore :

Resolved, if the honourable the Senate concur herein, That the person administering the government of this state be requested to issue his proclamation, offering a reward of five thousand dollars, for the discovery of the said William Morgan, if living ; and a like sum of five thousand dollars for the murderer or murderers of said Morgan if dead, to be paid on conviction.

Resolved, if the honourable the Senate concur herein, That a joint committee of the two houses be appointed, consisting of five members, two to be taken from the Senate and three from the Assembly, whose duty it shall be to visit the several counties of Ontario, Monroe, Livingston, Genesee, Erie, Niagara and Orleans, or such of them as they shall think proper, with full power to send for persons and papers, to inquire into the facts and circumstances connected with the abduction, detention and disposition of the said William Morgan, and to report their proceedings to the next legislature ; that such other and further proceedings may be adopted as the nature of the case and the liberty and safety of our citizens may require.

After considerable debate in the house, both of the above resolutions were lost. The objection urged against the first, respecting which the house seemed nearly unanimous, was, that offering so large a sum, in addition to that offered by the Governor, would be a strong temptation to perjury, in consequence of which, in the present excited state of the public mind, the innocent might be brought to suffer with the guilty. It was objected to the second, that it was unnecessary the existing laws being sufficient, that it would increase rather than allay the excitement in the west, that they could not clothe the committee with sufficient power to make it efficient, and if they could, it was questionable whether it would be wise and prudent to do it, &c. and so it was lost. This will unquestionably prove a great disappointment to the people in the west, and will in all probability tend to still greater excitement. We regret the failure of the second resolution, as we think the object proposed by it better calculated than any thing else, to elicit the truth respecting this dark and mysterious affair.

On the 19th of March the grand jury made a presentment to the court of Oyer and Terminer for the county of Monroe, stating that they had given their most serious and industrious investigation to the subject of the abduction of William Morgan, but from all the testimony before them, they did not think themselves warranted to find a bill of indictment against any individual. It has been stated on the floor of the Assembly, that the grand jury, in that county, a fortnight after, found bills of indictment against *seventeen* individuals, as being concerned in the abduction of this man, who are to have their trial in May.